

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANTO 04144 062330Z

60

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 SY-02 SCCT-01 IO-03 INR-09

INRE-00 A-01 OPR-01 PRS-01 NSCE-00 NSC-07 CIAE-00 L-02

H-01 SP-02 DRC-01 RSC-01 /057 W

----- 020321

O 062200Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1702

INFO USUN NY IMMEDIATE 0316

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SANTO DOMINGO 4144

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: HUTCHINSON CASE - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH BARBARA
HUTCHINSON AND MENDEZ VARGAS OCTOBER 6

REF : SD 4143

1. FOLLOWING MY CONVERSATION WITH POLICE CHIEF GUZMAN REPORTED REFTEL, TWO POLICE COLONELS ACCOMPANIED ME TO THE FIELD TELEPHONE AND STAYED WITH ME THROUGHOUT THE HOUR LONG CONVERSATION. AT VARIOUS INTERVALS DURING THE PROLONGED CONVERSATION WITH MENDEZ I QUERIED THE COLONELS WHETHER THEY OBJECTED TO THE LENGTH OR CONTENT OF MY SIDE OF CONVERSATION; THEY SIGNALLED ENCOURAGEMENT, INSTEAD.

2. ONE COLONEL TURNED THE CRANK OF THE FIELD TELEPHONE RESTING ON A PING PONG TABLE IN THE GARAGE-LIKE STRUCTURE BEHIND THE BAPTIST CHURCH. WHEN THE COLONEL SAID THAT I WISHED TO SPEAK TO HUTCHINSON, MENDEZ REPLIED THAT HE WISHED TO SPEAK TO ME. WHEN I REPEATED THE REQUEST, MENDEZ REPLIED THAT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO TALK WITH HUTCHINSON BY THIS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 SANTO 04144 062330Z

PRIVATE MEANS. AFTER MORE CAJOLING HE AGREED TO PERMIT ME TO

TALK TO HER PROVIDED IT WAS IN SPANISH AND THAT SHE NOT REPLY.
I AGREED PROVIDED HE PUT HUTCHINSON ON THE PHONE SO THAT I COULD
BE CERATIN THAT SHE WAS LISTENING. HUTCHINSON TALKED BRIEFLY IN
ENGLISH IN CHIPPER FASHION SAYING THAT THE POLICE HAD BEEN AT IT
AGAIN LAST NIGHT. I REPLIED THAT IT WOULD NOT BE REPEATED TONIGHT
TO WHICH SHE SAID, "THANKS". TURNING TO SPANISH, I SAID
THAT SHE MUST KEEP HER PATIENCE AND SPIRIT FOR IT COULD BE A
LONG HAUL AND I WAS COUNTING UPON HER TO SET AN EXAMPLE FOR
ALL OF THE REST. I CONTINUED THAT I THOUGHT HER LIFE WAS
NOT SERIOUSLY ENDANGERED BECAUSE THE TERRORISTS UNDERSTOOD
THAT ANY ACTION ON THEIR PART AGAINST THE HOSTAGES WOULD
MEET WITH IMMEDIATE RETALIATION. I ASSURED
THE AUDIENCE THAT THE POLICE HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO TAKE NO
VIOLENT INITIATIVES. I THEN ASKED TO TALK TO HER AGAIN TO
ASSURE SHE WAS STILL THERE. WHEN SHE WAS ON THE PHONE,
I ASKED WHETHER SHE HAD HEARD ALL AND SHE REPLIED "NOT
EVERYTHING BECAUSE I HAD TO LEAVE THE ROOM."

3. THEREUPON MENDEZ VARGAS TOOK OVER THE PHONE. HE SAID HE
WANTED ME TO KNOW THAT IF THE POLICE THOUGHT THEY COULD SCARE
THE CAPTORS, LET THEM TRY IT. THE CAPTORS HAD THE HOSTAGES
AND WOULD FIGHT FROM THE GROUND FLOOR AND ON THE TOP FLOOR.
I REPLIED FIRMLY THAT I KNEW THAT POLICE HAD NO INTENTION OF
TRYING ANYTHING VIOLENT UNLESS HIS GROUP TOOK THE FIRST STEP.
IF THE CAPTORS DID NOT TOUCH THE HOSTAGES, THERE WOULD BE NO
VIOLENCE FROM EITHER SIDE. MENDEZ VARGAS INTERJECTED,
PREACHER-LIKE, "WE DON'T MISTREAT ANYBODY, WE ARE
REVOLUTIONARIES." I WENT ON TO SAY, EMPHASIZING THAT I WAS
SPEAKING PERSONALLY ONLY, THAT WITH THE QUESTION OF VIOLENCE
REMOVED FROM THE EQUATION, THE CAPTORS OUGHT TO TAKE
ANOTHER LOOK AT THEIR COMMUNIQUE. SINCE MY FIRM UNDERSTANDING
WAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF RELEASING ANY
OF THE PRISONERS ON THE GROUP'S LIST AND THEREFORE THE
POSSIBILITY OF REALIZING POINT 2 OF THEIR COMMUNIQUE
(RELEASING POLITICAL PRISONERS) WAS NIL, THEY OUGHT TO
CONSIDER ISSUING ANOTHER COMMUNIQUE FOCUSSING ON THEIR THIRD
POINT (ASYLUM IN MEXICO OR PERU).

4. MENDEZ REPLIED THAT ALL DECISIONS WERE TAKEN BY THE GROUP AND
HE WAS THE SPOKESMAN. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HOWEVER, HE SAID
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 SANTO 04144 062330Z

THAT THEY HAD HEARD THAT AT A MEETING PEREZ Y PEREZ (ARMY CHIEF
OF STAFF) HAD HELD ABOUT A MONTH AGO, PLANS WERE MADE TO KILL
PLINIO MATOS. "THAT FORCED US TO TAKE ACTION." THE
POLICE, HE CONTINUED, WERE BRUTAL. HIS GROUP HAD TRIED EVERYTHING
THEY COULD BY PEACEFUL MEANS. MATOS WAS SICK BUT THE GOVERN-
MENT HAD TURNED DOWN THEIR REQUEST TO GET A DOCTOR TO HIM.
I REPLIED THAT I UNDERSTOOD THAT PLINIO MATOS WAS IN JAIL.
(HE HAS BEEN HELD SINCE LAST NOVEMBER PENDING TRIAL.)

EMPHASIZING AGAIN THAT I WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I SUGGESTED THAT IF PROTECTING MATOS WAS THEIR CONCERN, PERHAPS THE GOVERNMENT COULD GIVE A GUARANTEE THAT HE WOULD NOT BE MISTREATED WHILE IN JAIL AND I COULD LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING MY GOVERNMENT AND THE OTHERS CONCERNED GIVE AN ENDORSEMENT ("AVAL") OF THIS GUARANTEE. MENDEZ SAID HE DIDN'T BELIEVE BALAGUERIST WORDS EVEN IF A GUARANTEE WAS GIVEN. I SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME ARRANGEMENT FOR VISITS TO MATOS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GUARANTOR COUNTRIES TO VERIFY THAT HE WAS NOT BEING MISTREATED. THAT WOULD CERTAINLY BE BETTER THAN THE EXISTING SITUATION, SINCE MATOS WOULD NOT IN ANY EVENT BE FREED.

5. MENDEZ VARGAS COMPLAINED ABOUT THE NOISE THE POLICE WERE MAKING AT NIGHT AROUND THE CONSULATE. THE NOISE DIDN'T BOTHER HIS GROUP, ONLY THE HOSTAGES. I RETORTED THAT IF HE WAS SINCERE IN HIS FEELINGS ABOUT THE HEALTH OF THE HOSTAGES, THEN HE OUGHT TO LET THEM GO. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF HE WAS TRYING TO USE PRESSURE TACTICS, I HAD ENDURED THINGS THAT WERE A LOT TOUGHER, AND WASN'T INTIMIDATED EASILY. MENDEZ REPLIED, AS IF APOLOGETICALLY: "I'M NOT TRYING TO PRESSURE YOU..." WE'RE TRYING TO BE FLEDIBLE, HE CONTINUED, AND EVEN YOU COMMENTED THAT OUR COMMUNIQUE WAS SENSIBLE ("SENSATO"). I INTERJECTED THAT WHAT I HAD ACTUALLY SAID IN REPLY TO A PRESS QUERY WAS THAT THE GROUP'S DECISION TO DROP THE RANSOM DEMAND WAS "SENSATO". MENDEZ CONTINUED THAT THE GROUP HAD PUT OUT A COMMUNIQUE WHICH SHOWED THAT THEY WERE FLEXIBLE, IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT THAT WAS NOT FLEXIBLE.

6 TAKING THIS OPENING, I SUGGESTED THAT IF THE GROUP DIDN'T HEAR ANY NOISE THAT EVENING, THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN AS A SIGNAL FROM THE GOVERNMENT. SUCH SIGNALS WERE SOMETIMES MADE SUBTLY, I CONTINUED, BUT I WAS SURE THAT THEY WOULD BE RECEIVED BY A
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 SANTO 04144 062330Z

PERSON OF MENDEZ' INTELLIGENCE AND UNDERSTANDING. MENDEZ RESPONDED THAT IF THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT AGREE TO LIVERATE PLINIO MATOS, THERE COULD BE NO UNDERSTANDING. UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO DO THIS, HE STATED, "DON'T CALL US."

7 I REPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO CHANCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD DO THIS AND THAT THE GROUP SHOULD THEREFORE THINK ABOUT HOW TO GET OUT OF THEIR SITUATION. IT DIDN'T MATTER TO THE GOVERNMENT HOW LONG THIS LASTED, I SUGGESTED. THE POLICE WERE GOING HOME EVERY NIGHT, SLEEPING WITH THEIR WIVES AND PLAYING WITH THEIR CHILDREN (MENDEZ HAS TWO SMALL DAUGHTERS). MENDEZ SAID HE UNDERSTOOD BUT "THAT'S OUT POSITION", AND HE ENDED THE CONVERSATION WITH A CHEERFUL: "SALUDOS. QUE LA VAYA BIEN."
HURWITCH

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, PARAMILITARY FORCES, POLITICAL SITUATION, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANTO04144
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740283-0455
From: SANTO DOMINGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741069/aaaacgii.tel
Line Count: 168
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: SD 4143
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <12 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUTCHINSON CASE - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH BARBARA HUTCHINSON AND MENDEZ VARGAS OCTOBER 6
TAGS: PINS, PDIP, DR, US, SP, VE, (HUTCHINSON, BARBARA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005